N3

THE STATE OF THE Church of Christ,

MILITANCY upon EARTH,

And the DUTY of it, with respect to

Penal LAWS,

IN A

SERMON

Preach'd at the Assizes at *Chelmsford* In the County of *ESSEX*, 8 *MARCH* 168⅞.

By *RICHARD GOLTY* M. A.
Minister of *Hutton* in the County aforesaid.

Quod tibi non vis, alteri ne feceris.

LONDON, Printed and Published by *Randall Taylor* near *Stationers-Hall*. 1688.

This may be Printed.

SUNDERLAND. P.

To the Right Honourable Sir *Robert Wright* Knight, Lord Chief Juſtice of *England*, to the Honourable Sir *John Powel* Knight, one of the Juſtices of His Majeſties Court of *Kings-Bench*; My Lords, the Judges at the Aſſize holden at *Chelmsford*, &c. And alſo to the Right Worſhipful Sir *Thomas Manby* Knight, High Sheriff of the County aforeſaid.

THIS Sermon, *at the Appointment of the* High Sheriff, *was Preach'd before* Your Lordſhips *and the* Great Aſſembly *at the* Aſſizes; *and whatever unkind and ſiniſtrous Cenſures in this nice and critical Age, may be caſt upon me and it, yet it was* honeſtly deſign'd *by me, in Service to the Peace and Unity of the* Chriſtian Church, *to affect that* Auditory *with a ſenſe of their Obligation conſtantly to aſſert what is neceſſary to the ſupport and honour of* Religion *among us, and to allay our ſalt and eager Differences and Animoſities, in what is impertinent thereunto; to diſpoſe us to a willingneſs to be rid of thoſe Apples of Strife, that have been the notorious occaſion of Diſcord and Contention in this unhappily divided Kingdom. I can't but hope that there is ſuch a general ſenſe of our having been too long under thoſe ſymptomes of Gods diſpleaſure, which the Prophet* Iſaiah 9. 21. *obſerves, concerning the* Jews (that *while*

Ephraim *was divided against* Manasseh, *and* Manasseh *against* Ephraim, *and both against* Judah, *Gods Anger was not turned away, but his hand was stretched out still against them*) *as may prepare our hearts to a chearful concurrence in, and compliance with such healing Proposals, as are proper for the establishing amongst us a Christian Amity and brotherly Reconciliation. I have humble Confidence that this, which was my end in Preaching, is* Your Lordships *and* Worships, *in laying me under such Obligation to the Publication of it, as I cannot in decency decline; not doubting but that all such as bear* Good-Will to Zion, *will promote such uniting Methods, that all single and narrow Interests, may give place to that of* common Christianity; *that no* unchristian heats and contests, *may cause such* alienation *in* affection *among Brethren of the same* Sacred Family, *as for trifles to fall out in their way to their* Fathers House; *but that we may all consent in the pursuit of the Divine Ends of* Religion, *which are sincere Devotion towards God, sound Faith in Christ, Holiness in Heart and Life, Humility, Meekness, Brother-Love and Charity towards Men; in service to which, that Your* Honours *and* Worship *may be eminent in your respective Stations Instrumentally, is the most hearty Prayer of*

Your most Obedient
and Humble Servant
RIC. GOLTY.

S. *Matthew* Chap. XIII. the 29th and the former part of the 30th. Verſe.

But he ſaid, Nay; leſt while ye gather up the Tares, ye root up alſo the Wheat with them; Let both grow up together until the Harveſt.

THe ſhorteſt Preface will be an unſeaſonable Remora to my Entry into that Spacious Field in which my Text ingages my travel; it being by the moſt Divine Expoſitor, with reſpect to its Extent, ſtyl'd the World.

I ſhall therefore obſerve to you, That in this whole Parable of the Tares and Wheat, our Bleſſed Saviour doth firſt deſcribe the State, and ſecondly preſcribe the Duty of his Church in its Militancy here upon Earth.

1 In the firſt of which 'tis evident, that tho Chriſt himſelf is the Seedſman, tho he ſows only the good ſeed of Pure and Divine Doctrine, yet when the

blade ſprings up, the tares alſo appear: Tho the Church is ſtyl'd here the Kingdom of God, in which he in eſpecial governs, yet there are in it too many rebellious and undutiful *Subjects:* Tho the Apoſtle tells us, 'Tis the Houſe of God, in which by his *grace* and *ſpirit*, he particularly reſides, yet 'tis not void of *ungracious* and *diſobedient ſervants*. 'Tis *Magna Domus Dei*, but in it there are not only *Veſſels of Gold and Silver*, but of *Wood* and *Earth*; ſome to *honour* and ſome to *diſhonour*. Tho 'tis that *Vine* which *Gods right hand* hath planted, yet it hath ſome *dead* and *infertile branches*. That this is the condition of the *Chriſtian Church* in this World, is not only the purport of this but of the Parable of the *Fold*, conſiſting both of *Sheep* and *Goats*, of the *Barn Floor*, having both *Wheat* and *Chaffe*, and of the *Net* incloſing *Fiſhes good* and *bad*.

To this purpoſe St. *Auſtine* in his Firſt Book *De Civitate Dei*, ſaith, *Perplexæ ſunt iſtæ duæ Civitates in hoc ſeculo invicemque permiſtæ*; The City of God and the City of Satan, are ſo intermix'd in this World, that they are not to be ſeparated till the Day of Judgment.

This from all that make common Obſervation, commands ſuch an *univerſal acknowledgment*, that I ſhall not waſte the time in offering further enlargment upon it; only from it obſerve the *Unaccountableneſs*

accountableneſs of the Separation in the *Donatiſts* of old, and ſome others, of late, from the *Viſible Church*, upon pretence of Spots and Corruptions in it; notwithſtanding which, we are to be firm to that *Article in our Creed*, in believing *One Holy Catholick Church. Denominatio ſit a nobiliori*; and 'tis one, tho one part is *Militant* here on *Earth*, and the other *Triumphant in Heaven.*

It muſt be here in a ſtate of *Imperfection*; 'tis at the *great Harveſt*, then, and not till then, it will be Perfect, conſiſting only of the *Righteous*, as St. *Auſtine*, *Contra Donatiſtas*, *Tandem ipſam unam & ſanctam Eccleſiam, nunc habere mixtos malos, tunc non habituram*: Now the *Holy Church* hath a mixture of unholy Men in it, which then it will not have. At that great Day *Chriſt* will preſent it to himſelf without ſpot, and blameleſs. Then, *only the Wheat will be gathered into his Barn.*

II. But 'tis the Direction *Chriſt* gives in this place [that being the moſt ſeaſonable and uſeful at this time] to which I ſhall now confine my Diſcourſe. When the Blade ſprung up, the Tares alſo appeared, the Servants inquiring in this uneaſie, and to them unexpected Caſe, *Wilt thou that we go and gather them up?* In anſwer to this their demand, he ſaid, *Nay*, &c.

Where first he enters his Denial.

2. He gives his positive Sentence, *Let them grow up together.*

The Reason of the Negative, *Lest while ye gather up the Tares*, &c.

And of the Positive, why suffer'd in their growth? Because at the time of the *Harvest* they could more seasonably, and with greater safety, be separated from the *Wheat*. *Then I will say to the Reapers*, &c.

In my procedure upon this, I shall endeavour first to shew you what is meant by *Tares:*

2. What *Christ* intends in this his Answer:

And 3. To accommodate the whole of it to our Use.

1. First, ζιζάνια which is the greek word, is mention'd only in this place in the New Testament, and it is rarely to be found in other Authors, that its obscurity gives the occasion of variety in Translations of it; the *French* render it *Lolium darnel*; and *Theophrast.* saith, *That Corn doth sometime Lolieſcere, degenerate into Darnel.*

Diodate thinks it some particular Weed growing amongst Corn in that Countrey. Dr. *Hammond* translates it *Cockle.* Others give a more general Interpretation of it, as *Mala Herba & planta ſemini noxia*; we translate it *Tares:*

By

By which may be understood *Tyne*, or a sort of *Wild Fitches*, which hath small *fibrous Roots*, and in twisting about the Roots of the *Corn*, sucks away its Nourishment, and hath claspers in the Branches, that fastening upon the Stalk, depresses it, and without greatest hazard to it, cannot be separated from it.

Since in this Parable the Devil is the Sower of them, and the *Tares are Wicked Men*, in this Variety may be meant [as in our Marginal Notes] all noisome Weeds whatsoever that are noxious to the *Corn*, and particularly *Infelix Lolium Darnel*, which naturally disaffects the *Head*, and so may properly denote Men Erring in *Judgment*, or more rank and unsavoury *Weeds*, as *Carlock*, *Mayweed*, &c. which may properly describe Men Vicious in their Lives, such as walk disorderly; 'tis the unhappy *Fate of the Church* to be infested with them both. *Infelix Lolium & steriles dominantur Avenæ.*

II. But 2. What doth *Christ* mean in forbidding his Servants to gather these up, and in suffering their growth 'till the *Harvest*, which himself being the Expositor, is to the end of the World?

First, Negatively, *Christ* is not to be interpreted in this, as if he were at all pleas'd with the growth of these Weeds.

It

It would undoubtedly be most grateful to him to have only such pure *Grain* in his Field, as is fit to be gathered into his *Barn*, *Beauxamis in locum; Docetur hic non quale sit officium nostrum, sed quæ sit futura Ecclesiæ conditio.* We are advised here not so much in the Duty of the *Servants*, as in the Condition of the *Field*.

Yet neither 2. doth *Christ* intend the least prohibition to the *Magistrates Execution of Justice* in punishing *Malefactors*.

The *Sword* of *Justice* is not to be born in vain, *Magistrates* are to be a Terrour to Evil Doers; in their rooting out them there can be no danger, but altogether safety to the *Wheat*; if they should be let alone, so as to proceed in impunity till the *Harvest*, the World would be but *Magnum Latrocinium*, or a *Circean Stable*; it would be an unclean *Stage*, where only *Vice* and *Villany* would act its part; it would be like to that *Field* under the Curse of *Job* 31. 40. *Thistles would grow instead of Wheat*, and *Cockle instead of Barly*; or like *Solomons* Field of the Sluggard, nothing would appear in it to denominate it a *Field* of *Corn*, but 'twould be all over-grown with *Briars* and *Thorns*.

'Tis observable, *Christ* doth not say, *Regna hujus Mundi*, the Kingdom of this World, but

Regnum

Regnum Cœli, the Kingdom of Heaven; which is universally interpreted of the *Church*, and tho in our *Saviours* Exposition of it, 'tis styl'd the World, yet that is in respect to its *Catholicism* and *Universality*, as dispers'd over the whole World; according to the Prophesies of it, it extends from Sea to Sea, and *Christ* sent his *Disciples* to all Nations, and the *Apostle* tells us, *That their sound is gone into all the World*; 'tis properly his Kingdom redeem'd by his *Blood*, sanctified and enlightened by his *Spirit*, and will at last be presented to himself without spot and blemish.

That this Parable is meant not of a Civil and Political, but of an *Ecclesiastical Body*, is generally agreed; but then still the Question returns, Whether our *Saviour* enters his *Noli Pros* —— against *Ecclesiastical Censures*?

To this 'tis answer'd 3. Negatively, That *Christ* here intends no Prohibition to *Church Censures* for the punishing of Offenders.

St. *Austin* puts and determines this Case thus, *Ipse Dominus cum servis volentibus* ζιζάνια *colligere dicit, sinite utraq; crescere usq; ad messem, premisit causam dicens, ne forte cum vultis colligere* ζιζάνια *eradicetis & triticum; ubi satis ostendit, tum metus iste non subest, non dormiat severitas disciplinæ.* Our Lord to the Servants appearing in readiness to gather

ther the tares, requiring their growth together till the Harveſt; he intimates the Cauſe, *Leſt with them ye root up alſo the Wheat:* in evidence that when no danger of that, then the ſeverity of Diſcipline is to take place. Of which at large in his Epiſtle *contra Parmen. & contra Vincent.*

Chriſt himſelf decreed that he that would not hear the *Church*, ſhould be as an *Heathen* or *Publican*, and the Apoſtles by unqueſtionable Authority gave Sentence of Excommunication upon the Inceſtuous Corinthian; 1 *Cor.* 5. 4. and upon *Hymenus* and *Alexander*, 1 *Tim.* 1. 20.

The Church is not to be ſuppoſed an undiſciplin'd Rout, diveſted of power neceſſary to its conſiſtence; which it would be, if it were here or elſewhere, under *prohibition* of exerciſing its *Cenſures*.

2. What then do's our Saviour mean in his thus expreſſing himſelf in this caſe to the ſervants? To which poſitively,

1 Firſt in general, He expects patience, lenity, and tender caution, in eradicating thoſe tares, he corrects the intemperate zeal of his Diſciples, in whom he foreſaw a diſpoſition with improper and undue ſeverities to proſecute offenders; of which they gave an early inſtance, in demanding fire from heaven to conſume the *Samaritans*.

The mind of Chriſt in this will be more particularly

larly understood by considering his Sentence

1 First, With respect to the Question, as put by the Servants, *Wilt thou that we go and gather them up?* And

2 Secondly, With respect to his Reason, Why not? *Lest while ye gather up the Tares, ye root up the Wheat also.*

1 Now in their Enquiry, *Wilt thou that we go and gather them up?* They signifie their intent of a sudden and immediate dispatch of them without the exercise of due *Patience*, and necessary *Consideration*; thus,

Chrisost. in *Matth.* interprets the Servants intending to prosecute *Hereticks* with Fire and *Sword*, and saith, That if by his Negative they had not been obliged to alter their Resolutions, Bloodshed and War must have followed all over the World.

The Word in the Original for *gathering up*, is συλλέξαμεν, and signifies not so much a single Collection, as a Gathering them up in Bundles; they would at once have swept away these *Tares* by some *devouring Judgment*, like that of Fire from *Heaven*; to this their Proposition Christ enters his dissent, and tho he well enough approv'd of the thing, yet by no means consented with them in the time and manner they would effect it, but

gives check to that *devouring Zeal* that would destroy all Opposers; and doth intend first, that this *gathering together*, or *rooting up*, be rather *gladio oris* then *ore gladii*; that no other Sword, then the *Sword of the Spirit* be used; that by *Admonition* by the *Sword* of the *Spirit* of *Meekness* they be rather *restor'd*; Christ determines against their immediate and utter destruction in that way they design'd, *lest in gathering them up, they root up the Wheat.*

The Sword tho never so well edg'd, is an ill distinguisher between *Wheat* and *Tares*, and War the most improper Judge to determine *Religious Controversies*: 'Tis *gladius delphicus*, and strikes on both sides without difference to Men or their Doctrines; it involves the Innocent and the Guilty in the same Calamity; like those dreadful Thunderbolts, *Minutius Fælix* tells of, *Sine delectu tangunt sacra & profana, hominis noxios ferunt & religiosos*; they without distinction *strike places sacred and profane, and persons innocent and nocent*; but 'tis never more fatally devouring, than when in the hands of those in whom *Gesselius* one of the *Anti-remonstrants* in *Roterdam* plac'd it, who defin'd, That if the *Prince* or *Clergy* neglected the *Reformation* of a *Church, Necesse est id facere plebeios licet ad sanguinem usq; pro ea pugnent:* That the

the *Plebeians* must Reform, tho it be with a Resistance unto Blood.

Theophylact makes the more Christian Comment upon the Text, who saith, *God would not by War have the Tares pull'd up, lest in so doing the Righteous suffer with the Wicked.*

Theophylact in Loc. saith, *The Servants were so incens'd and inflam'd against these Tares upon their appearance in their Lords Field* βούλεται ἐκκόψαι ἐκ τοῦ βίου, *to save the trouble of a dilatory Process, were resolved by a rash Execution to rid them from the troubles of this miserable and wretched Life.*

This return of our Lord to the Servants, if it be not a strict Prohibition of Capital Punishments, it is a severe Caution, that due care be had in inflicting it, *lest the Wheat also be rooted up.*

'Tis certain the Primitive Christians did interpret Christ, in saying, *He came to save mens lives, not to destroy them*; and here in my Text, as entring not barely a Caveat, but a Prohibition of punishing with death upon the score of Religion.

They reckon'd such a Process foreign to the Temper and contradictory to the Rules of Christianity.

It was once St. *Austin's* Opinion, *Neminem ad unitatem Christi cogendum esse*, That none were to

be compelled to become Christians: And when the insolence of the Donatists made it necessary for him to alter his mind, yet as *Bellarmin* confesses, *Semper excepit supplicium mortis*; He always excepted punishment with death.

If it had been thought lawful to punish Heresie with death, the Apologies of *Tertullian* and the Primitive Christians, would have been in a great part insignificant.

'Tis a Modern Maxime in Christianity, but no where, that I can find, an Article of Faith, *Posse Hæreticos ab Ecclesia damnatos temporalibus pœnis & etiam morte mulctari*: That Hereticks condemned by the Church, were by the Civil Magistrate to be sentenced to Temporal Punishment, yea to Death it self.

It was *Calvin*'s Opinion, *Hæreticos jure gladii coercendos*; That Hereticks were to be restrain'd by the Power of the Sword: Which *Beza* improves in his Tract, *De Hæreticis puniendis*, where he lays down this Thesis, *Hæreticos interdum capitali supplicio a Magistratibus coercendos*: That Hereticks are to suffer Capital Punishment.

This Question was better determin'd in the more early and purer Times of Christianity, as by *Lactantius lib.* 5. *cap.* 10. *Defendendam esse religionem non occidendo sed moriendo.* Religion is to

be

be defended rather by the expoſing our own, than violating the lives of others.

Our Saviour here forbids their thus being gathered up, leſt the Wheat be rooted up alſo; it being evident if the ſervants had gone in that Method, they had wrong'd the Harveſt; for as St. *Auſtine* ſaith, *Multi primo zizania ſunt & poſtea triticum fiunt; fieri poteſt ut qui noxio dogmate depravatus eſt cras reſipiſcat & defendere poteſt veritatem:* as St. *Auſtin*, once a Manichee, afterwards *Malleus Hereticorum.* Many at firſt appear tares, which afterwards become wheat; he that is depraved with Error now, may repent too morrow.

Upon this ſaith St. *Jerome*, *Monemur non cito amputare fratrem*, not raſhly to cut off a Brother, for they that are bad now, may be better hereafter; *Niſi Deus expectaret impium, non haberet unde glorificaret pium*; Had not God patiently expected the Repentance and Converſion of ſuch whom Men would deſtroy, *ad laudabilem mutationem non perveniſſent*, they had never attained to Saving Repentance.

Had Fire at the inſtance of the Diſciples conſumed the *Samaritans*, they had been prevented in their after-receiving the Goſpel; had not Gods Patience given reſpite to the *Tares* after their firſt diſcovery,

diſcovery, *nec* Mattheum *de Publicano Evangeliſtam*, *nec* Magdalenam *de Meretrice penitentem habuiſſet*; *ſi Deus eradicaſſet* Paulum *perſequentem*, *non haberet Eccleſia* Paulum *prædicantem*; *Matthew* of a Publican had never been an Evangeliſt, nor *Magdalen* the Harlot become *Magdalen* the Penitent; if *Saul* had been rooted out when he was a Perſecutor, the Church would ever have wanted *Paul* the Apoſtle. The meaning of Chriſt in the Text then is, That they might have ſpace for Repentance.

St. *Chryſoſt.* affirms, That a Heretick, tho he perſiſts with obſtinacy in his Hereſie, yet is not to be Puniſh'd with Death, with whom *Euthymius* conſents. Chriſt, ſaith he, in this Parable would not ſuffer the *plucking up the Tares*, *leſt the Wheat ſhould be rooted up with them*; forbidding the execution of *Hereticks*, leſt the *Orthodox* ſuffer with them.

It was therefore an unchriſtian heat in *Calvin*, that ſent *Servetus* to the Flames, and in the *Switzers*, that commanded the Execution of *Valentine Gentilis* at *Bazil*; and in *Maximilian* the Emperour in cauſing the *Priſcillianiſts* to be put to death; tho *Sulpitius Severus* ſaith of them, That they were *homines luce indigniſſimi*; yet he adds they were *peſſimo exemplo necati*; tho they were the

the worſt of Men, yet their Execution was of dangerous Conſequence. And when *Alexius* of *Conſtantinople* cauſed the *Bongomili* to be put to Death, who (if their Opinions were candidly repreſented) were ſufficiently bad, yet the *Eaſtern Biſhops*, diſallow'd of the Fact; and *Baronius* tells us, it was the ancient uſage of the *Primitive Biſhops* in moving the *Secular Power* againſt *Hereticks*, ſo to manage it, *Ut tamen a capitali ſupplicio inferendo dehortati ſunt.*

'Tis evident that Capital Puniſhment had its firſt riſe from the *Heathen* and *Arrian Emperours*, and in that it was after return'd by the Chriſtians upon their Enemies; it was becauſe the Man was too hard for the Chriſtian.

Thirdly, Tho it is more generally interpreted, that the Servants reſolved by the above-mentioned Severity, to cut them off from the body of Mankind, yet others, that they intended only to cut them from the Body of the Church; and *Lyra* and *Gorran* are of Opinion, That the Servants deſign to gather them up, was in ſuch a way as was proper to the Church, *Separanda eos a Communione Eccleſiæ*, by ſeparating them from Church Communion.

Chriſt may probably here intend a caution and lenity in that direful and ſolemn Sentence of *Excommunication*,

munication, which is an *Amputation* or a cutting off from the Body of Christ; 'tis in the Name and Power of Christ, a delivery over unto Satan for the destruction of the Flesh, that the Spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

In comport with the meaning of Christ here, it was an old Rule, *Non Excommunicandam multitudinem*, that a multitude were not to be Excommunicated.

There was to be no gathering up in Bundles in this Life: the Church did only *Legere*, select one out of many Offenders, *Ut pœna ad paucos esset, metus ad omnes; tormenta paucorum exempla omnium:* That the Punishment of a few, might be caution to all.

Dr. *Taylor in Duct. Dubitant*, tells us, *The Judgment of the Church in this Censure is an effective terrible Declaration of the Judgment of God, and therefore must not be exterminating and final for things of little concernment.*

The Second Canon of the Council at *Worms*, doth Decree, *Ut Nullus sacerdotum, quanquam rectæ fidei, homines, pro parvis & levibus causis suspendat:* That no Priest, tho never so sound in the Faith, may suspend Men from Church Communion for a light Cause.

Dr.

Dr. *Taylor* in his *Duct. Dubitant.* asserts, That no Man is to be separated from the Church, but he that separates himself from God; and tells us, That he who for a trifling cause cuts off a man from Church Communion, is like him in the Fable, who with an Axe beat out his Neighbours brains, that he might brush off a fly, which he espied on his Fore-head: or like an indiscreet and severe Nurse, that to clean the Childs head of the *Dandruff*, fleas off his Skin.

All endeavours ought first to be us'd, that he may be restor'd with the *Spirit* of *Meekness*, that by Admonition and Reproof, to which the Scriptures are profitable, he may be reclaim'd, and till it appears *vulnus immedicabile*, he is not with that severity to be cut off.

Fourthly, The meaning of Christ may probably be, That in the *indifferent in Religion*, such as are mention'd *Rom.* 14. in which the Kingdom of Heaven doth not consist, the obligation of Christians is to exercise Charity, mutual Condescension, and Forbearance one towards another. The Apostle there directs to the alloy of all Animosity and Discord about such things, and provides that there be no Censuring or Grieving one another, and to this purpose he allows a Liberty to Men of either *Persuasion*, informing us,

That Christ died for both, and that God receiv'd both:

The Controversie in these indifferent things, lies not between *Wheat* and *Tares*, but between *Wheat* and *Wheat*, and it may be is founded only because one grows in a more fertile Soyl, and on a more Florid Stalk, or is of a brighter Complexion than the other.

That the true *Corn* should thus go together by the Ears, we may be sure is assignable to the hand of an Enemy, and if our Lord permits the Concrescence of *Tares* and *Wheat*, much more that *Wheat* and *Wheat* grow together.

'Tis as natural and usual for Christians to differ in their Sentiments in matters of that kind, as 'tis for Men to be of divers Statures and Complexions, wherefore (the Apostle telling us, *That he who doubteth is damned if he eat*) by Penalties to require a consent in one Opinion in things so indifferent, would be as hard as for one to thrust out his Neighbours *Eye*, because not so strong and piercing as his own, and would be a barbarity exceeding that of *Procrustes* the Robber, who measured all men by his own bed, and would bring them to that dimension, either by a *Rack* or *Dislocation*, he only torturing the Bodies, while the other wounds the Consciences, and cruciates the Minds of Men.

'Tis observeable in this Parable, that the Servants entred their Complaint against such as appear'd *Tares*, and it was for the rooting up of them they offer'd their service, to which our Saviour answer'd as in my Text, *Nay*, &c.

If they had address'd to their Lord with their Censures of their Fellow Servants, and had signified an Inclination, because in every trifling punctilio they agreed not with the Complainants, that therefore they would go and *gather them up*, our Lord would have given them another kind of Answer.

If the *Pharisees* were incurioseable in their neglect of the *great things* of the *Law*, through their Zeal in the lesser things of it, Christians are much more Criminal in violating the *great Gospel Law* of *Charity* and *Meekness*, upon the score of such things as are not at all required by any *Divine Law*.

If it were *inimicus homo* that sow'd those *Tares* that endanger'd the *Wheat*, certainly it is *inimicissimus homo* that would gather up the *Wheat* instead of *Tares*.

'Tis here observeable, that tho the *Tares* appeared to the eys of the Servants, yet our Saviour did not adventure the well-doing of his Field upon their hand, so as to allow their Eradication;

if he had given any intimation of the Field, being committed to such a Conduct, as without possibility of being injurious to the *Wheat*, the *Tares* might be gathered up; the force of the reason of his Prohibition, *Lest with them ye root up the Wheat*, would be enervated.

'Tis probable our Saviour design'd the prevention of this, when he respited them till the *Harvest*, well knowing that they may then appear to be Children of the Kingdom, which through the passion or inadvertency of his Servants, would as *Tares* have been bundled up for the fire.

III. Thirdly, In the Accommodation of all this to our use, though it may be indecent for me to insist too particularly on the Parallel between the State of the Field, and the Condition of the Church of Christ amongst us, so as to charge the growth of the *Tares* to the *Supineness* or any other default in the Servants, or to suggest, that those concern'd in gathering the *Tares*, have not with the Servants of the Houshold consulted their Lord, nor taken their measures from him: Yet I shall adventure to give you the Judgments of such as are of great Honour and Authority upon this Subject; and shall close my Discourse with a *Recommendation* of the Example of the Servants to our Imitation.

The Authorities of ſuch as have given *their Opinion in this Matter*:

The Lord Chancellor *Hide* his Speech to the *Parliament* 1660., is fill'd up with the *Expreſſions* of his *Senſe* of this *Caſe* and *Directions for its Cure.*

The *Honourable* and *Pious* Lord Chief Juſtice *Hale*, lamenting that the Cauſe of *Love* and *Piety* was hindred by our preſent Conſtitutions, did declare, *That the only means to heal us, was a New Act of Uniformity, that ſhould neither leave all at liberty, nor impoſe any thing but what was neceſſary*: And with the Aſſiſtance of the Lord Keeper *Bridgman* and *Biſhop Wilkins*, drew up the Form of a Bill to be tendred to the *Parliament* to that purpoſe.

The Arch-biſhop of *Armagh*, for the *healing* of *Diſtractions*, and for the return of a *Wiſhed for Peace and Unity*, did contrive ſome prudent Accommodation neceſſary.

Biſhop *Taylor* in his *Duct. Dubitant*, expreſſes himſelf abundantly in this Caſe, as thus, with reſpect to our Condition he gives it as a Rule, *That the Eccleſiaſtical Laws muſt be eaſie and charitable, and when they are not, they oblige not, and that Eccleſiaſtical Laws that are meerly ſuch, can't be univerſal and perpetual.*

Biſhop

Bishop Davenant in his Letter to Durus saith, *That which makes Schisms perpetual, is the exercise of a Tyrannical Power, so as not to acknowledge any for Brethren, or admit any to Communion with them, who will not receive from them, in any difference of Opinion, a Law both of believing and speaking.*

'Tis the determination of a Learned Doctor of our *Church*, *That without Controversie, the main inlet of all the Distractions, Confusions, and Divisions, of the Christian World, is by adding other Conditions of Church Communion, than Christ hath done.*

Were it needful, I might fill a Volume with Quotations of this kind; but,

I shall only instance in these which next to that in my Text, ought to be the greatest Authority with us.

King *James* the First of Pious Memory, as *Causabon* in his Epistle to Cardinal *Perron*, informs us, *Thought that for Concord there is no nearer way than diligently to separate things necessary from the unnecessary, and to bestow all our Labour, that we may agree in what is necessary, and that in what is not so, there may be Christian Liberty allow'd.*

The Royal Martyr *Charles* the First of glorious Memory, in Consideration of the State of the Kingdom in 1641, speaks thus, *As for Differences among our selves for Matters in their own nature,*

nature, that are indifferent concerning Religion, We shall willingly Comply, with the Advice of our Parliament, that some Law may be made for the exemption of Tender Consciences from Punishment or Prosecution for such Ceremonies, which by the judgment of most men are held to be matters indifferent, and of some, to be absolutely unlawful.

The late King *Charles* the Second of blessed Memory, in his Declaration from *Breda* first, and in his Declaration for Indulgence to Tender Consciences afterwards, gave sufficient Evidence of his Concurrent Opinion with his Royal Progenitors.

Thus it can't but be acknowledg'd, That some of the Wisest and most Learned, and the greatest of Men in these Three last Reigns, were affected with a sense of a Disease that the *Church* and *Nation* have been labouring under, and it appears that his Majesties Royal Ancestors had it often in their Thoughts, and upon their Desires, that it might be heal'd.

And as for our present Gracious Soveraign, that now wears the Imperial Crown, and sways the Royal Scepter, whom God preserve; it appears that what was in the Heart of *David* his Father, hath a long time been upon the Heart, and now is upon the Hand of our *Soloman* his Son,

and

and his *Hand findeth to do it with all his Might*: He like a Tender and Prudent Physician, experiencing the inefficacy and inconvenience of those corroding and acrimonious Applications, that have been too long us'd, thinks it proper, instead of that Salt and Vinegar, which hath only increas'd and inflam'd our Wounds, to recommend the Lenitives of *Oyl* and *Balsam*; most probably hoping, that the warm Beams of an Indulging Sun will prevail to the laying of that viciousness of Temper, which the rough and tempestuous Wind had occasion'd.

Our *Healing Soveraign* observing the Body *Politick* and *Ecclesiastick*, like the Man in the Gospel that fell among Thieves, if not half dead, yet lying sorely wounded; like the Good *Samaritan*, is pouring in Oyl and Wine, and while he is so, let not any of us be like him that passed by on the other side, as all together unconcern'd, or like him that only vouchsaf'd to look, but offer'd nothing to relieve him in that distressed Case; but let us all to our Capacities help to the quenching those common Flames, and the allaying those *threatning heats* that have been so fatal to us, and contribute our utmost in this *most Christian Service*: some of us by Humility

and

and Obedience, others of us by Compassion and Condescension, and all of us by our Prayers and Tears.

Lastly, To this we must reckon our selves oblig'd, by considering the Example of the Servants in the Text, *In servis habemus tam quod laudemus quam quod imitemur*: We have in the Servants both what is commendable and imitable.

They cleared themselves from a treachorous betraying the Trust repos'd in them, of the Field, by reporting to their Master the unexpected accident of the growth of the *Tares*; they being inform'd that an Enemy had done it, offer'd their service to redress the Mischief; that if the Enemy entred the Field by their Sloth, he might be expell'd by their Zeal. St. *Austin* to that Inquiry, Who is that Man that is eaten up with Zeal to Gods House? Answers, *Qui omnia quæ videt perversa satagit emendare*: That if he sees the foundation of it too narrow and strait, will endeavour the inlargement of its basis to its due extent.

If he perceives an inconvenience in the fense incompassing the Field, will consult such an Amendment of it as may neither keep out such as belong to Christs Fold, nor suffer the wild Beast of the Field, nor the wild Boar of the Wood, neither Turk nor Pagan, to enter in. And that our

Zeal in this, may not be an *Ignis Fatuus* to precipitate us into unsafe and dangerous Methods, that it may not be a feaverish heat, that invades the Health, and threatens the Life of that Body that cherishes it, but that it may be a Coal kindled at Gods Altar, let us with the Servants in the Text, *go to our Lord.*

So, first, not to be too much influenc'd by our Passions. *Solomon* tells us, *Wrath is Cruel, Anger is outragious, and nothing can stand before Envy*, Pro. 27. 4.

So as, secondly, Not to take our Measures from the Examples of others, to return to them in proportion to those undue severities which at any time have been received from them, the Rule of our Saviour, Is not to do to others as they do, but as we would have them do to our selves.

Let us therefore receive our Directions from Christ, and acquiesce in them, referring all to our Masters Will, and then proceed according to his Dictates, whose Service consists altogether in the *following of his own Rules*; for in so doing we shall most promote our Masters Honour, and be most servicable to *his Field* the *Church*; and best provide, that when we shall be translated from our Stations in his Kingdom here, we may be made partakers of his Eternal Kingdom in Heaven;

Heaven; and in the mean time, God in his infinite Mercy, ſo direct the Counſels and Influence the Hearts of Men, that the *Tares* which at the *Harveſt* ſhall be gathered, may not in the mean time be able either to ſuppreſs the *Wheat*, or deſtroy the *Field*; and that our Lord Jeſus, who loved his *Church*, and gave himſelf for it, may Sanctify and Cleanſe it, and at laſt preſent it to Himſelf a *Glorious Church* without ſpot or blemiſh. *To Him, with the Father and the Holy Ghoſt, be all Honour, Glory, and Praiſe, both now and for evermore.* Amen.

F I N I S.

FINIS.

Dr. Carsarell,

THE Gentlemen of the Grand-Jury for this County, are all come to give you their hearty Thanks for your Sermon, and do request, you would be pleas'd to Print it.

Humphrey Foresser, Bar.
Foreman.

Aldgate Ass.
for Berks,
Aug. 6. 1669.